

THE PLAYROOM™

Program Guide



THE PLAYROOM™

Program Guide

IBM®/Tandy®
Macintosh®
Apple®

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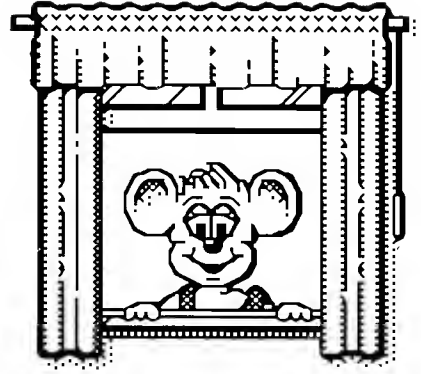
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CONTENTS

Welcome to The Playroom	4
Quick Start	6
Getting Started	
Apple	8
IBM/Tandy & Compatibles	9
Macintosh	11
Menu Options	
Help, Sound, Game Levels, and Printing	13
Playing the Games	
The Playroom	16
The Clock	17
The Computer	17
The Mixed-Up Toy	18
The Mousehole	19
The ABC Book	21
The Spinner Toy	22
Learning List	23
The Playbook: Activities	25
Games and Coloring Sheets	30
About the Authors	42
Warranty	43
The Playroom Experts	45
Backup Disk Information	47

WELCOME TO THE PLAYROOM



We hope you and your child spend many happy hours with The Playroom. As you'll find, it's a delightful, child-sized world that's filled with games, toys, surprises... and learning experiences. Every game, toy, and surprise has something interesting to teach your child.

Young children are, as every parent knows, infinitely curious by nature. They love to explore. That's how they learn new things, and they love to learn.

The Playroom is designed to encourage this natural curiosity and reward it with fascinating new discoveries. As children play in The Playroom, they automatically begin to learn about letters, numbers, and time. But they're learning more than basic math and reading concepts, they're also learning about computers and exercising their thinking skills.

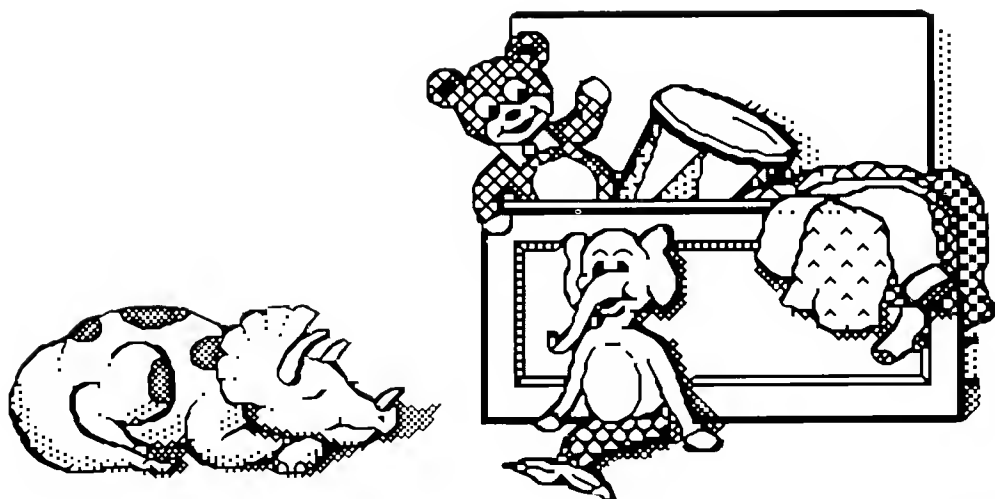
More than just a learning program, The Playroom is also a cheerful, tireless playmate for your child. A playmate who's always willing to play the same game a dozen times in a row, who never gets bored, for example, at repeating the same words over and over, as often as your child desires. A playmate who is never busy, tired, or under the weather.

The entire Playroom development team has worked (and played) to make The Playroom the kind of program we want for our own children and those of our friends. But we'd love to get your reactions, too. So please feel free to drop us a line and tell us what you and your child think.

*Signed,
The Brøderbund Team*

Using this Guide

The Playroom Program Guide is both a guide to using The Playroom program and a resource for additional activities to encourage your child's desire to learn. Each section contains specific information of interest. If you are familiar and comfortable with computers, the Quick Start section may be all you need to start using The Playroom. If you prefer a more in-depth explanation, the Getting Started section contains step-by-step instructions for starting The Playroom and for installing it on a hard disk. The Menu Options section explains how to customize The Playroom for your specific needs. The Playing the Games section offers specific information on each game in the Playroom. The Learning List explains which skills are emphasized in The Playroom activities. The Playroom Activities section provides additional activities that you and your child can share in conjunction with The Playroom.



QUICK START

If your child will be handling The Playroom program disks, we recommend you spend time explaining the proper way to hold, insert, and remove disks, stressing the importance of being careful with the disks. Each disk has a label with a picture and a letter. The Playroom will prompt for the correct disk with both the letter and the picture. You may want to practice the correct procedures together the first few times your child uses The Playroom.

Also, please be sure to remove the Velcro tab from the Dakin® “Pepper Mouse” before letting your child play with it.

APPLE II

Put The Playroom Disk A into your disk drive, close the drive door, and then turn on your computer and monitor.

IBM/TANDY & COMPATIBLES

Start up your computer with a DOS disk. At the A> prompt, put The Playroom Disk A into your disk drive; then close the drive door and type **PLAYROOM** and press Enter. (See “Getting Started” for special instructions if you have a Hercules, EGA, or VGA card, or are using the Tandy 1000).

MACINTOSH

Put The Playroom Disk A into your disk drive and turn on your computer and monitor.

Getting Around

Press any key or mouse/joystick button to begin. Move the cursor to an object on the screen that interests you and choose it.



- **Mouse or joystick** – Use your mouse or joystick to move the cursor and press the button to choose.

- **Keyboard only** – Use the **arrow** keys to move the cursor and **Enter/Return** to make a selection. Use the **Esc** key to go back to the Playroom screen from one of the toys in the playroom. In the Computer and Spinner Toy game, use the **Spacebar** key to wake up Pepper, the sleeping mouse.

For help, use “Shift-?” (Apple), “⌘-?” (Macintosh), or **F1** (IBM or Compatibles).



GETTING STARTED

Apple

1. Insert The Playroom Disk A into your disk drive and close the drive door.
2. Turn on your computer and monitor.
3. The program will load itself into memory and wait for you to press a key, or the mouse or joystick button to start the game. During the game you will be prompted to insert another disk when necessary. Please make sure you wait until the red disk drive light is off before doing so.
4. To choose an object on the screen you may use a mouse, joystick, or keyboard. Move the cursor to the object with the mouse, joystick, or **arrow** keys. Press the button or **Return** key to choose the object.

HARD DISK INSTALLATION

You can install The Playroom on your hard disk by following the steps outlined below:

1. Insert The Playroom Disk A into a floppy drive.
2. Use the Apple II System Utilities to create a sub-directory on your hard disk and name it Playroom.
3. Now use the System Utilities to copy all of the files except ProDOS on Disk A to the Playroom sub-directory on your hard disk.
4. Remove the Disk A, turn it over and reinsert it with side B up in your floppy drive and repeat the process. Continue this with Disk C and side D. If you are uncertain how to use the System Utilities please see your Apple II Utilities Guide.



NOTE: You will need to briefly insert The Playroom Disk A into your disk drive when starting the program from a hard disk.

SPECIAL KEYS FOR APPLE COMPUTERS

Arrow Keys	Move the cursor
Return	Selects object pointed to by cursor
Spacebar	Wakes up (or puts to sleep) Pepper Mouse, activates surprise time
Escape	From Game screen, takes player back to the Playroom screen
Tab	Moves the cursor to the Game Control Panel
Shift – ?	Brings up menu screen with Help, Sound, Levels, and Printer options
Control – P	Brings up printer dialog box if printing is enabled.
Letters (Aa-Zz)	Choose a letter
Control-S	Toggles sound on/off
Control-Q	Quits

IBM, TANDY & Compatibles

1. Start up your computer using your DOS disk.
2. When you see the A> prompt, remove the DOS disk and replace it with The Playroom Disk A, label side up.
3. Type **PLAYROOM** and press **Enter**.

NOTE: The first time you use The Playroom, the program will go through a setup procedure that determines the type of computer and monitor that you are using. If at some point you want to change the setup, type **PLAYROOM SETUP** and answer the questions. The Playroom will always start up with the last setup designated by you.



4. The program will load itself into memory and wait for you to press a key, or the mouse or joystick button to start the game. During the game you will be prompted to insert another disk when necessary. Please make sure you wait until the red disk drive light is off before doing so.

5. To choose an object on the screen move the cursor to the object with the mouse, joystick, or **arrow** keys. Press the button or **Enter** key to choose the object.

HARD DISK INSTALLATION

You can install The Playroom on your hard disk by following the steps outlined below:

1. Set your current drive and directory to the location where you want to install The Playroom program (for example, C:\PLAYROOM). If you need more information on creating and using directories, please consult your DOS manual.

2. Insert The Playroom Disk A into drive A and close the drive door. Type **COPY A:*.*** and then press **Enter**. This will copy all the files from The Playroom Disk A onto your hard disk. Repeat this process for the remaining Playroom disks.

- You will need to briefly insert The Playroom Disk A into your floppy disk drive when starting the program from a hard disk.

SPECIAL KEYS FOR IBM/TANDY & COMPATIBLES

Arrow Keys	Moves the cursor
Enter/↵	Selects object pointed to by cursor
Spacebar	Wakes up (or puts to sleep) Pepper Mouse, activates surprise time
Escape	From the Game screen, takes player back to the Playroom screen
Tab	Moves the cursor to the Game Control Panel
F1	Brings up menu screen with Help, Sound, Levels, and Printer options

Alt-P	Brings up printer dialog box if printing is enabled
Letters (Aa-Zz)	Choose a letter
Control-S	Toggles sound on/off
Control-Q	Quits

Macintosh

1. Insert The Playroom Disk A into your disk drive and start up your computer.
2. The program will load itself into memory and wait for you to press the mouse button to start the game.
3. Point the cursor to any object on the screen and press the mouse button to choose it. During the game you will be prompted to insert The Playroom Disk B.

HARD DISK INSTALLATION

You can install The Playroom on your hard disk by following the steps outlined below:

1. Create a new folder for The Playroom where you want to install the program. If you need more information on creating a folder, please consult your Macintosh Owner's Guide.
2. Insert The Playroom Disk A and open the disk by double-clicking its icon. Drag everything except the System and the ImageWriter icons to the new Playroom folder.
3. Insert The Playroom Disk B and open the disk by double-clicking its icon. Drag everything to the new Playroom folder.

NOTE: You will need to briefly insert The Playroom Disk A into your disk drive when starting the program from a hard disk.



SPECIAL KEYS FOR MACINTOSH

The following are the only keyboard controls on the Macintosh.

⌘ – Spacebar	Brings up and puts away the menu bar with various options
⌘ – P	Brings up the printer dialog if printing is enabled
⌘ – Q	Quits the program
⌘ – ?	Help
Letters (Aa-Zz)	Choose a letter

NOTE: We recommend that you do not run MultiFinder while your child is using The Playroom; it may give your child access to other applications or data files which might get deleted or changed by mistake. To see if MultiFinder is enabled, select Set Startup from the Special Menu on your Macintosh's Desktop. Make sure that the Finder is selected and not MultiFinder. (If you do run The Playroom under MultiFinder, the only way you can Quit is from The Playroom application.)

INITs or other memory resident programs may interfere with The Playroom. If you plan to use The Playroom's printing capabilities on a hard drive, be sure to select the correct printer from the Chooser before you start The Playroom.



MENU OPTIONS

HELP, SOUND, GAME LEVELS, AND PRINTING

IBM and Apple

Menu options let you customize The Playroom. You can choose the specific menu item you wish by either highlighting it with the mouse or joystick, or by using the **arrow** keys and the **Enter/Return** key.

Return to Game - returns you to your current activity in The Playroom.

How to Play - shows game instructions.

ABC Book Game Case Control - lets you choose either uppercase or lowercase letters.

Computer Keyboard Level - lets you set how many keys are shown when you are spelling.

Spinner Counting Level - lets you set the maximum number on the Spinner dial.

Keyboard/Joystick/Mouse - lets you decide how you will interact with The Playroom. The Playroom is compatible with the Adaptive Firmware Card™ for the Apple and the PC Serial A.I.D. device for the IBM with 640K memory. Select Keyboard on the Apple to use the device. For more information, see the manual included with each device.

Sound - sound may be turned on or off.

Printer - printer may be enabled or disabled.

Select Printer - From it you can choose your printer and printing options. If your printer is not on the list of supported printers, check your printer manual for its emulation modes. Most printers can emulate one of the printers supported by The Playroom.

Save These Settings - saves your selections to disk. The Playroom comes with certain settings selected. By saving your personal settings, the next time you start The Playroom it will use your settings instead of the default settings.

Macintosh

Menu options let you customize The Playroom. You can choose the specific menu item you wish by highlighting it with the mouse.

MENU

About The Playroom - credits for authors and publisher.

GAME MENU

Quit - exit The Playroom.

Print - lets you print if printing is enabled.

OPTIONS MENU

ABC Book Game Case Control - lets you choose either uppercase or lowercase letters.

Computer Keyboard Level - lets you set how many keys are shown when you are spelling.

Spinner Counting Level - lets you set the maximum number on the spinner dial.

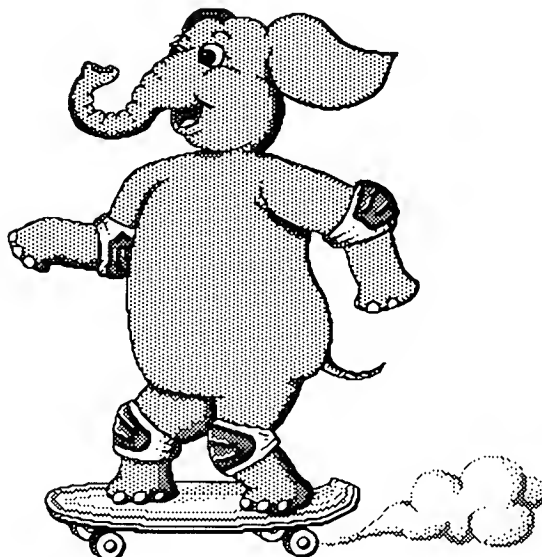
Sound - lets you turn sound on or off, and choose one of three volume levels.

Printer - printer may be enabled or disabled. The Playroom is shipped with the ImageWriter printer driver installed on the disk. If you wish to use the LaserWriter or another printer you will need to either boot with a System disk that contains the appropriate printer driver, or install The Playroom on a hard disk that contains the appropriate printer driver.

Save These Settings - saves your selections to disk. The Playroom comes with certain settings selected. By saving your personal settings, the next time you start The Playroom it will use your settings instead of the default settings.

HELP MENU

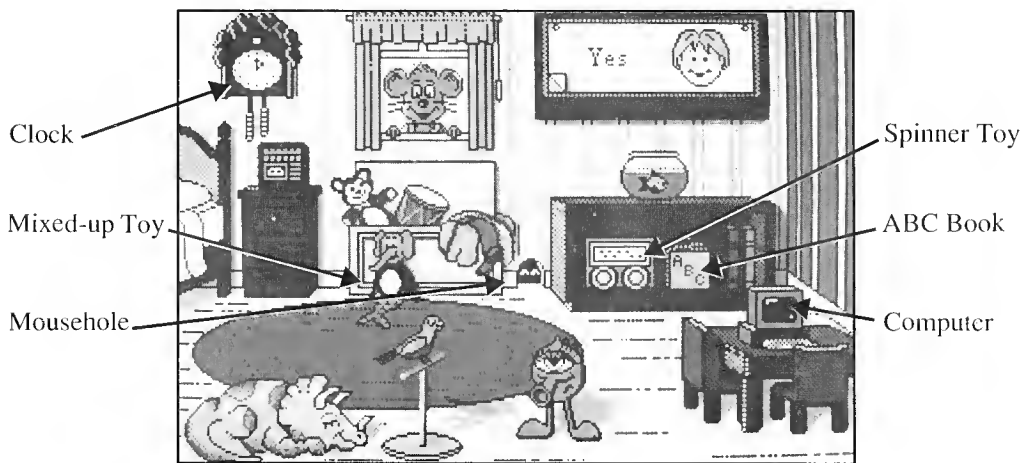
How to Play - shows game instructions.



PLAYING THE GAMES

The Playroom

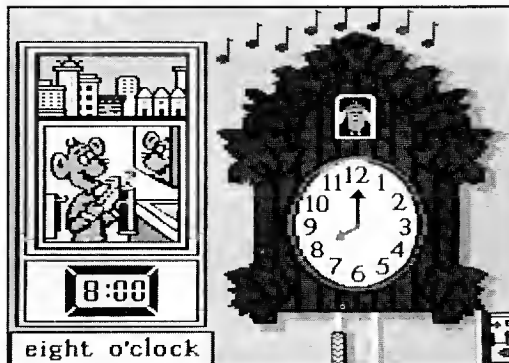
Let your child explore The Playroom by moving the cursor around the room. With a mouse or joystick, your child may click on one of the objects. With a keyboard use **arrow** keys to move the cursor, and **Enter/Return** to choose. The picture below shows all the active objects. For example, to find a dragon, choose the curtain on the window. Click on the radio to hear music. Or choose the fishbowl and watch the fish do somersaults. These are just a few of the toys and surprises in The Playroom. Some of the objects — the clock, mousehole, ABC book, spinner toy, computer, and mixed-up toy — lead to a game or activity on another screen. From there, your child can return to The Playroom at any time by choosing the little door in the lower right corner (or by pressing **Esc** using the keyboard). Note: If your program is not installed on a hard disk, you may see a prompt to insert another disk for some of the activities.



IBM/Tandy screen

The Clock

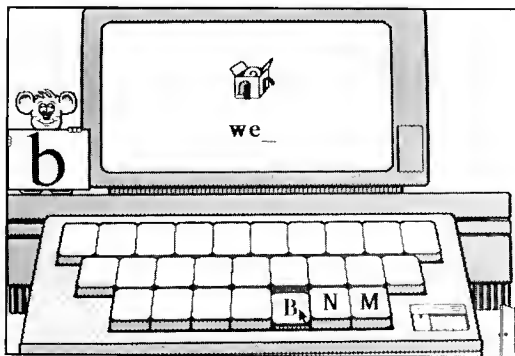
Choose a number on the clock face to see what Pepper Mouse is doing at that time of day. The clock cycles through all 24 hours to show Pepper at night as well as in the daytime. If your child clicks on the middle of the clock face, a surprise time will appear.



Apple screen

The keyboard controls use the **left or right arrow** keys to move left or right, the **up or down arrow** keys to move counterclockwise or clockwise, the **Enter/Return** key to make a selection, the **Spacebar** to activate the surprise time, and the **Esc** key to return to the Playroom.

The Computer



Macintosh screen

Ask your child to choose a letter from the computer keyboard. It will appear as a large, lowercase letter on the computer screen. Exploring the keyboard is a good way for children to get comfortable with uppercase and lowercase letters. When your child is ready to spell a word, wake up

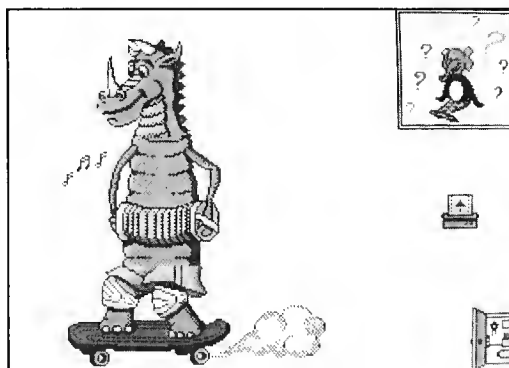
Pepper Mouse by pressing the **Spacebar** key or choosing Pepper Mouse. Eleven gifts will appear on the screen. Choose a gift and spell its name; then watch what happens! Don't be concerned if your child doesn't know which letter to type. If the wrong key is struck, Pepper will help by asking for the correct one.

The keyboard controls use the **left and right arrow** keys to move left and right on a single row of keys, the **up and down arrow** keys to move between rows or gifts, the letter **Aa-Zz** keys to select a letter, the **Enter/Return** key to make a selection, the **Spacebar** key to wake up Pepper, the **Tab** key to move the Keyboard Control Panel, and the **Esc** key to return to the playroom.

As your child learns, you can make the computer game more challenging by choosing a different level for the keyboard and spelling activities. Look on the lower right side of the keyboard to locate the Keyboard Control Panel. It lets you determine how much of the keyboard shows when your child is spelling a word. Use the Gifts Panel on the right side of the monitor screen to choose one of the sets of gifts. Both panels are closed when Pepper Mouse is asleep.

The Mixed-Up Toy

Experiment with the toy by changing each of its three body parts — the head, torso, and legs. Let your child use the cursor to make a choice. A new combination is created each time one of the body parts is selected. To change all the parts at once, choose the picture of the toy in the upper right corner of the screen. A random selection of body parts will appear.



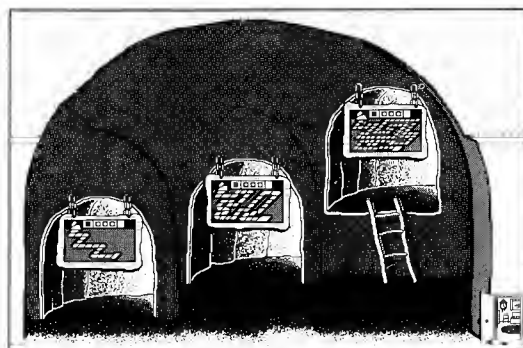
IBM/Tandy screen

The keyboard controls use the **left and right arrow** keys to move between the toy and the screen icons, the **up and down arrow** keys to move within the toy and the icons, the **Enter/Return** key to make a selection, and the **Esc** key to return to the Playroom.

NOTE: To make a picture of your child's favorite mixed-up toy, choose the printer icon, or use the keyboard special keys (Control **-P** on Apple computers, **⌘-P** on Macintosh computers, or **Alt-P** on IBM/Tandy compatible computers).

NOTE: If the printer icon does not show, bring up the menu (type Shift **-?** on Apple computers, **⌘-Spacebar** on Macintosh computers, or **F1** on IBM/Tandy compatible computers.) Then, choose "Printing on".

The Mousehole



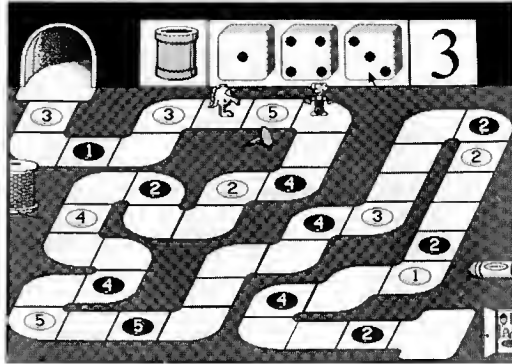
The mousehole in The Playroom screens leads to a counting game with three different levels. If your child can count to four, choose the first level (left mousehole). Levels two and three are for children who can count to six and nine respectively. Choose the game level you want.

To start, let your child decide how many will play. In the one-player game, your child, represented by Pepper, will play against the computer, which appears as a robot. The players in the two-player game are represented by Pepper and Look-A-Lot, the one-eyed creature who lives in The Playroom.

The object of the game is to be the first one to the winner's square at the end of the board. Pepper goes first in the one-player game. In the two-player game, the person who goes first selects either Pepper or Look-A-Lot. To roll the dice, choose a player or the dice shaker. When the three dice appear, have your child pick one with the cursor. Then the player automatically moves forward the number of spaces shown on the die.

The white circles move the players forward and the black circles bounce the players back. Watch for the victory dance at the end of the game!

If your child wants to start over or try a different game-board, choose the mousehole in the upper left corner of the screen. (The keyboard control for this is the **Tab** key).



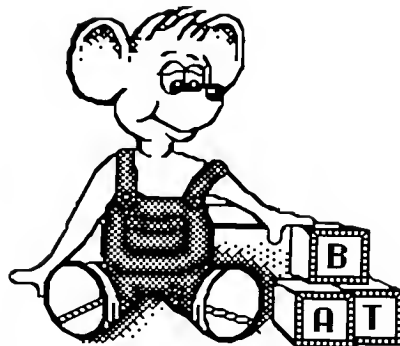
Macintosh screen



Macintosh screen

The keyboard controls use the **left and right arrow** keys to cycle through the dice and mousehole choices on the

entry screen, the **up and down arrow** keys to cycle between the top part of the screen and the door, the **Enter/Return** key to make a selection, and the **Esc** key to return to the Playroom. At the winner's screen any key will return you to the gameboard you just left.



The ABC Book

Encourage your child to decorate the Fantasy picture in the ABC Book with people, animals, and other objects. First, ask your child to select a letter of the alphabet. An object will appear, pick it up with the cursor and place it anywhere in the picture. If your child chooses an object



IBM/Tandy screen

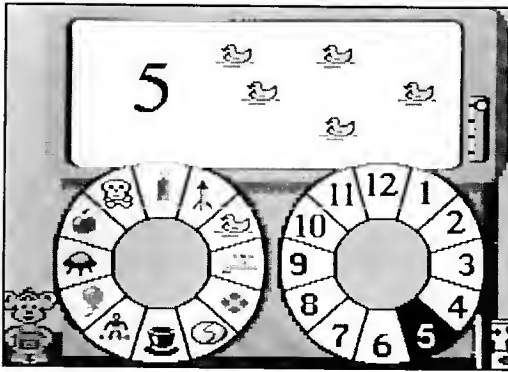
that is already in the picture, it will move with the cursor and drop off when the mouse, joystick button or Enter/Return key is pressed.

Your child can remove an object from the scene by putting it in the trash can. To remove *all* the objects from the screen, choose the garbage truck. When asked on the screen if you want to put the objects away, answer “yes”. To make a new picture appear, choose the page flap in the corner of the screen. Each picture has its own set of objects.

In the ABC area at the top of the screen the keyboard controls use the **left and right arrow** keys to cycle from letter to letter within a row and to the controls, the **up and down arrow** keys to change rows, and the **Enter/Return** key to make a selection. Tab will take you to the control panel. In the picture area the keyboard controls use the **arrow** keys to move the cursor or object, the **Enter/Return** key to choose or drop an object, and the **Esc** key to return to The Playroom.

NOTE: You can print your child’s favorite picture by selecting the printer icon. (For more detailed directions, see Menu Options).

The Spinner Toy



Apple screen

Your child can play with the Spinner Toy by choosing a number on the right-hand spinner or a picture on the left-hand spinner. If your child picks the picture of the hat when the right-hand spinner is pointing at 3, three hats will appear on the screen. Choose 10, and ten hats will appear.

After you and your child have explored the Spinner Toy, wake up Pepper for a counting game. There are faucets, ducks, rockets, and other things to count. If the correct number on the spinner wheel is chosen, the objects will move around. Don't be concerned if your child makes a mistake. Pepper will help count the objects and show which number to pick.

The keyboard controls use the **down arrow** key to move clockwise, the **up arrow** key to move counterclockwise, the **left and right arrow** keys to switch between the left or right spinner, Pepper, and the exit door, the **Enter/Return** key to make a selection, the **Spacebar** to activate Pepper, the **Tab** key to choose the Game Control Panel, and the **Esc** key to return to The Playroom.

Notice that when Pepper is awake, the control panel on the right side of the screen is open. You can decide how many objects to count by selecting a different level on the panel. See Getting Started to save settings to disk.

LEARNING LIST

As children explore The Playroom, they learn about letters, numbers, and time. The Playroom program also teaches your child to recognize or read safety words that are important. The Playroom games encourage strategic thinking, exploration, and creativity. The following list shows which skills are emphasized in The Playroom activities.

The Clock - The Clock activity helps your child learn how to tell time to the nearest hour. Time is represented in four ways:

- as analog time (the cuckoo clock face)
- as digital time (the LED display below Pepper)
- as words
- as the number of notes the cuckoo sings

Your child will discover that each time happens twice a day. The position of the sun or moon in the window helps children learn that time on the clock corresponds to the progress of the day or night.

The Computer - The computer game focuses on reading readiness, spelling skills, and computer keyboarding skills. It introduces your child to uppercase and lowercase letters, to the positions of letters on a standard keyboard, and to three-, four-, and five-letter words. In each set of ten words, the words represent every letter of the alphabet. They contain the beginning phonics sounds that young readers learn first.

The Mixed-Up Toy - This toy encourages children to be playfully creative. It also helps to develop analytical skills. With experience, your child will discover how to manipulate the parts of the toy to create a complete drawing (such as the picture of the clown).

The Mousehole - The Mousehole is a counting game that teaches mathematical skills (introduction to addition & subtraction via counting forwards and backwards) as well as game strategies. At the beginning, children may have to count the spots on the dice, but eventually they will learn to recognize the dot patterns instantly. Game strategy comes with experience as your child learns to choose the one die that results in the greatest advance, even though it might show the smallest number. Your child will also begin to make estimates of which die will lead to the black circles and how best to avoid them.

The ABC Book - The ABC Book combines creativity (arranging objects in a drawing) with a basic reading skill (associating a beginning letter with a word — A is for apple). This activity reinforces beginning sounds and enlarges your child's vocabulary by using different sets of words for each scene. When you play this game with your child, you may have the opportunity to answer questions about unfamiliar objects and where they belong in the picture. As children play this game, they may also make up imaginative stories that tell what is going on in the picture.

The Spinner Toy - The Spinner toy teaches children how to count and to recognize numerals 1-12. By counting many different objects, your child learns the concept that three means three whether it is three hats, three ducks, or three candles. This game also provides a structure for understanding the numeral as a symbol for a number of objects.



THE PLAYBOOK:

More Playroom Activities to Enjoy with your Child

The Playbook activities were created to help both parents and teachers enhance The Playroom program. As a parent, you are your child's primary role model. This is a precious opportunity to become actively involved in your child's development. Preschool teachers also play a key role in guiding children. They know that computers give young children a head start at a time when they are especially receptive to new ideas.

The Playroom is easy for a young child to understand. It provides a variety of activities that can be used in short periods of time and it allows the child to control these activities. The sounds and visual effects encourage playfulness and imagination. Parents who tested The Playroom also tried out the Playbook activities that follow. They found them enjoyable and an enriching part of their children's Playroom experience.

Some activities use pictures from the Program Guide. Instead of cutting them out from the Program Guide, you may want to photocopy them first. You may also want to glue them to card stock or cardboard before cutting them out.

Playbook Activities

1. Create a Story. Have your child create a picture on one of the backgrounds in the ABC Book. Print out the picture. Then, ask your child to tell you a story about the picture while you write it down (or you may wish to use a tape recorder). Mount the picture and story on posterboard. Collect several original stories to start your child's own personal library of stories.

2. Name Train. Have your child choose objects from the settings in the ABC Book. Each letter in your child's name will be represented by an object that begins with that letter. For example: using the Neighborhood setting, **Chris's** train would include the **Car**, the **Helicopter**, the **Radio**, the **Ice Cream Truck**, and the **Stop Sign**. Have your child make name trains with another friend or sibling. Then suggest they compare their trains to look for objects in common.

3. Counting Spinner Game. Make a new game with the spinner pattern provided in the back of this book. Ask your child to spin a number and to count out real objects to match the number shown on the spinner. Have a supply of small blocks, game chips, fish crackers, or macaroni on hand. They are fun to count. If you wish, give your child a small prize (stickers, gold stars, etc.) for correct answers.

4. Mixed-Up Creatures. Cut out body parts from magazines and help your child assemble mixed-up creatures by gluing together a head, middle, and bottom. Have your child name each creature and tell you about it. Write exactly what the child tells you even if the grammar isn't correct. (The idea is to encourage creativity and validate your child's words by writing them down. Your child learns that words are important and that they have meanings. This also encourages early writing and reading skills). Hold your child's finger under the words as you read back the story. He or she may remember the story and read along with you.

5. Playroom Color Sheets. The coloring sheets at the back of this Playbook section can be photocopied for your child to color. This is a good way to introduce the characters in The Playroom. To improve hand-eye coordination, you may sometimes want to encourage your child to color inside the lines and to cover all of the figure. But don't be afraid to let your young artist scribble, too. After all, scribbling is the way children start learning how to draw and write.

6. Sound Lotto. Use the Lotto board in the Playbook section to play a game with The Playroom. Choose an object on the Playroom screen that is shown on the lotto board and “click” the sound. Using the Lotto board, ask your child to locate the picture or character that makes this sound in The Playroom, then place a marker (a small object or piece of paper) on the picture. Continue until the board is filled. This game is a great way to practice listening skills.

7. Outdoor Pepper Hopscotch. Children can play the hopscotch game in pairs as they do in the Mousehole Game. Use school-type chalk to draw a gameboard of ten squares on a sidewalk or pavement. On four of the squares, draw ovals with numbers on them. The ovals will show how many spaces to jump forward or backward. Have each child take a turn by rolling one die and moving ahead the correct number of spaces. The first child to reach home wins. Rule: In any turn, only the first oval landed on will affect a player’s position.

8. Word Ladder Game. When your child has successfully played the Computer Game and knows many of the beginning sounds, play the word ladder game. Draw a ladder on paper. Put the base word for a three-letter word family (such as “bat”) on the bottom rung. Ask your child to think of other words that rhyme with bat to put on the ladder. Climb the ladder by writing these words on each rung. Keep these ladders so you can review them together.

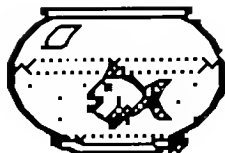
9. Secret Words. As your child becomes interested in reading the words in the Computer Game and the ABC Book, try this word collection game. Each day ask your child to whisper a secret word to you. Write the word on a card to collect in the child’s special Secret Word Box. The next day ask your child to read the word to you. If he or she remembers it, the card goes in the box. If your child can’t remember the word, identify the beginning sound. Keep the word until your child can say it. Each day ask for a new secret word and write it on a card. Continue as long as it is fun, but don’t force it as a drill. You want your child to come to you with the desire to learn to read new words.

10. Letter Matching. Make a set of uppercase and lowercase letter cards. Give your child 6-8 letter cards to match. Now show your child how to line up the capital letter and the small letter to make letter partners. Continue with more letter cards until your child can match the entire alphabet. Use the Computer Game to reinforce this skill. As the lowercase letter appears on the screen, the child can then match it to the uppercase letter on the keyboard.

11. What's the Number? Play a game with pasta shells (or other small objects) and one die. Roll the die and take that number of shells. Hide the shells under a dish and ask your child how many shells are under the dish. Continue the game, hiding the shells under different sized dishes until your child understands that the number of shells stays the same even when they are hidden from sight. Once your child understands this concept, extend the game to addition or subtraction by adding another die.

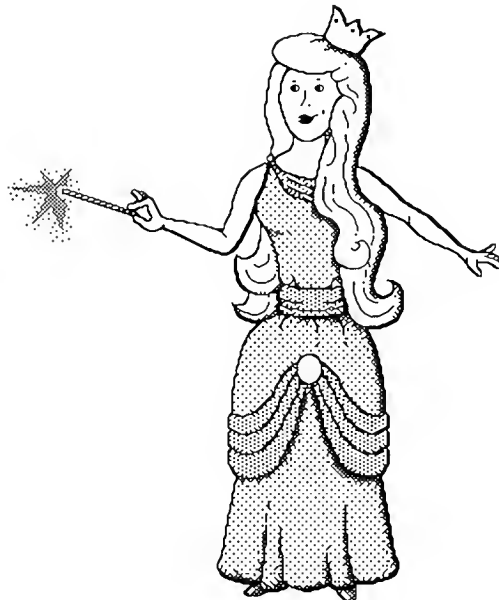
12. Finger Puppets. Cut out the finger puppets included in the Playbook section. Use the puppets to introduce the games on the computer, placing each puppet on top of the monitor as you play. Have your child talk for the puppet by asking the puppet questions that your child can answer.

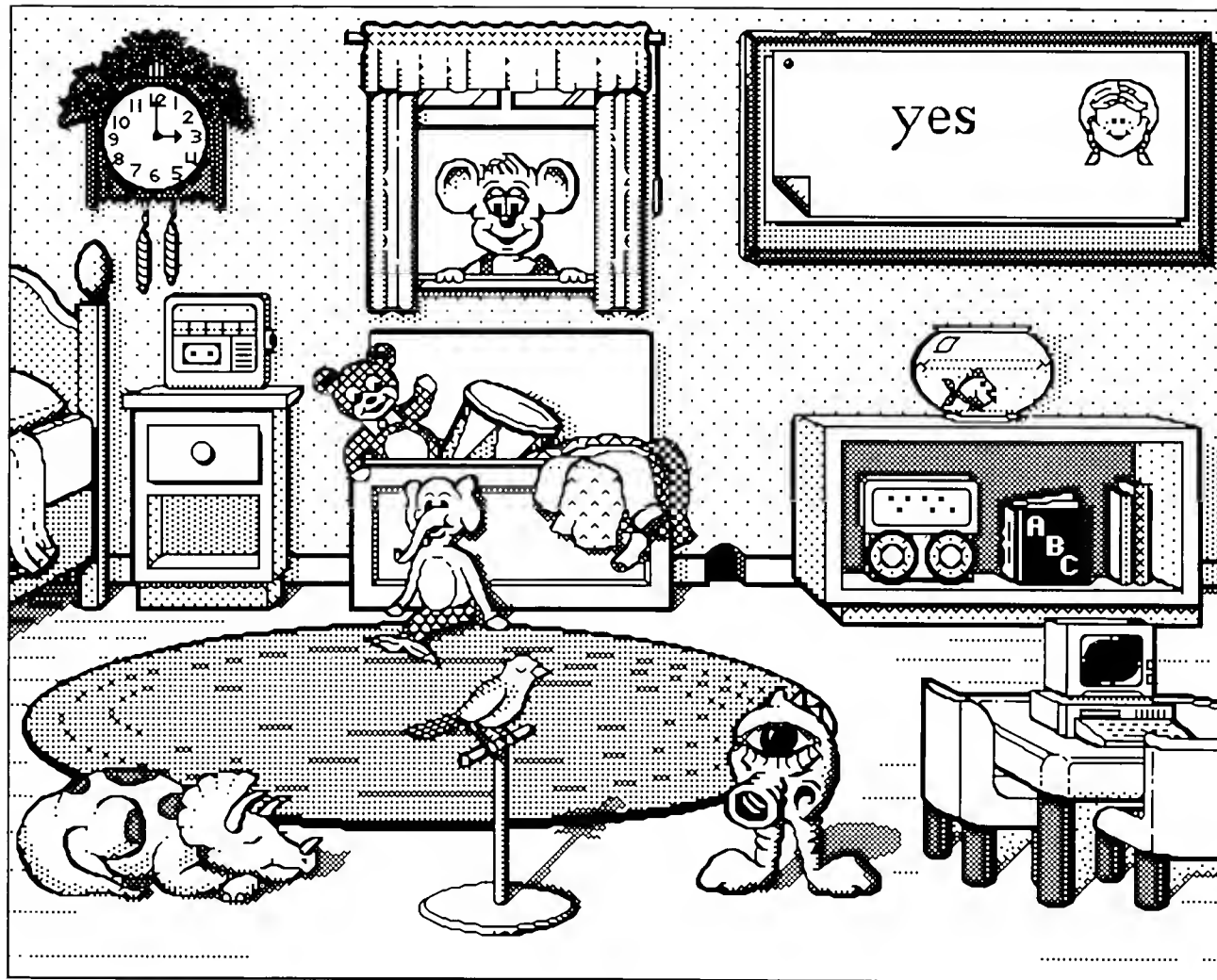
13. Sight Words. Create flashcards using the vocabulary words and pictures on the playroom bulletin board (upper right corner of the screen). Flash the cards for your child to recognize or read. After your child masters this set of cards, make a new set without pictures. Later on, add cards using familiar objects in the environment. Start with only a few words at a time, such as clock, oven, phone, bed, chair, etc. Do this activity as long as it's fun. Never drill or pressure your child to read.

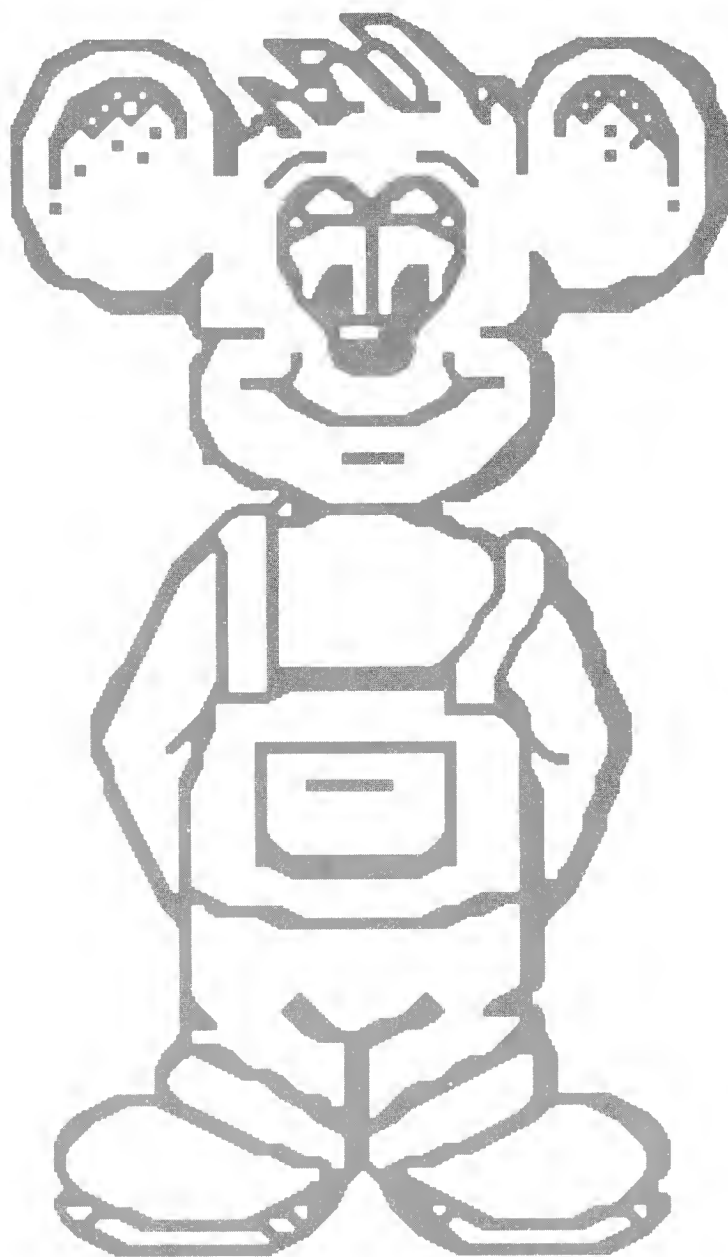


14. Night and Day. Play the Clock Game with your child and discuss what the mouse is doing each hour of the day and night. Talk about the differences between night and day. Then, using the Clock Activity pages in the Playbook section, review the order of events in a day. Have your child cut out the pictures and put them in order from left to right. Use one picture from a morning activity, one from an afternoon activity, and one from an evening activity.

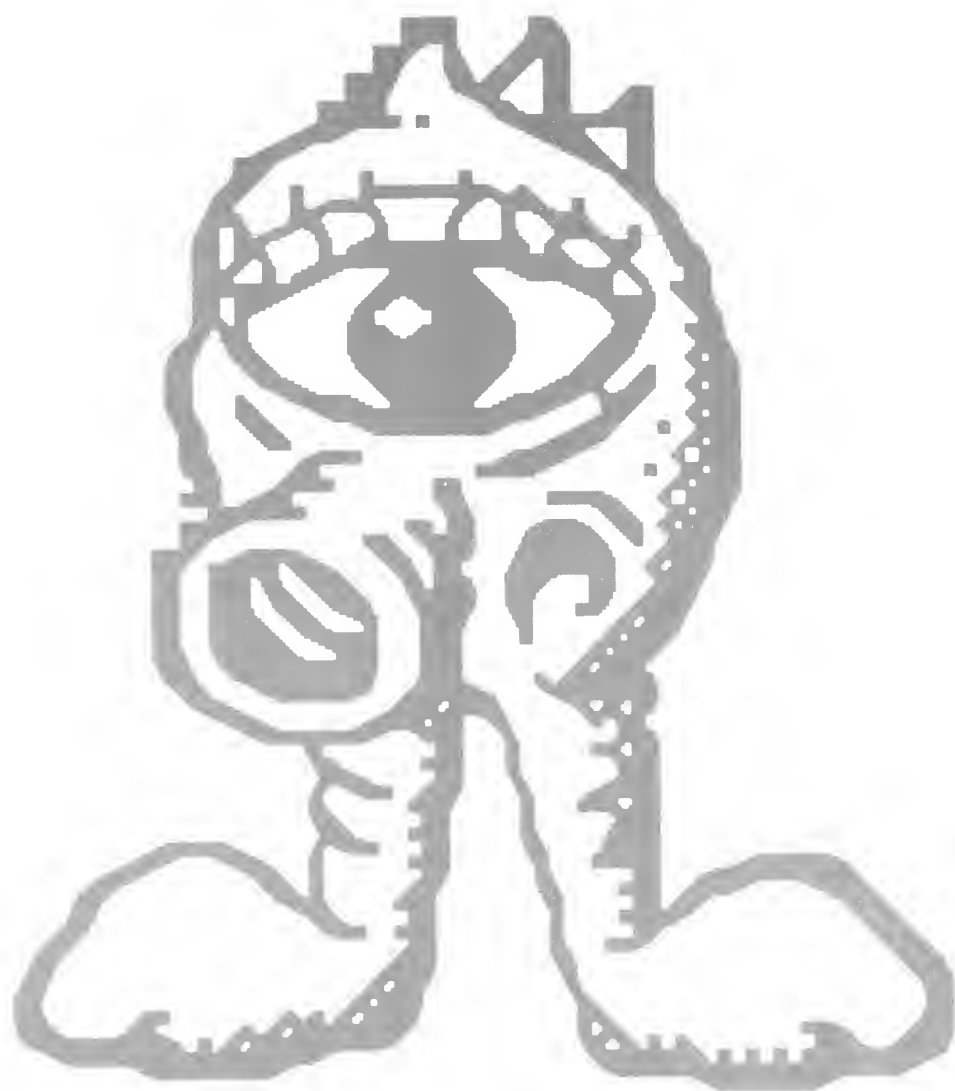
15. Secret Codes. Show your child how to use the alphabet in the ABC Book to spell secret messages. For example: from the neighborhood scene, your child might pick “C” for car, “A” for ambulance, and “T” for traffic light. When your child has spelled a word, he will ask you what the secret message is. Your answer is “CAT.” In this way you and your child spell words and discover each other’s secret code.













Sound Lotto

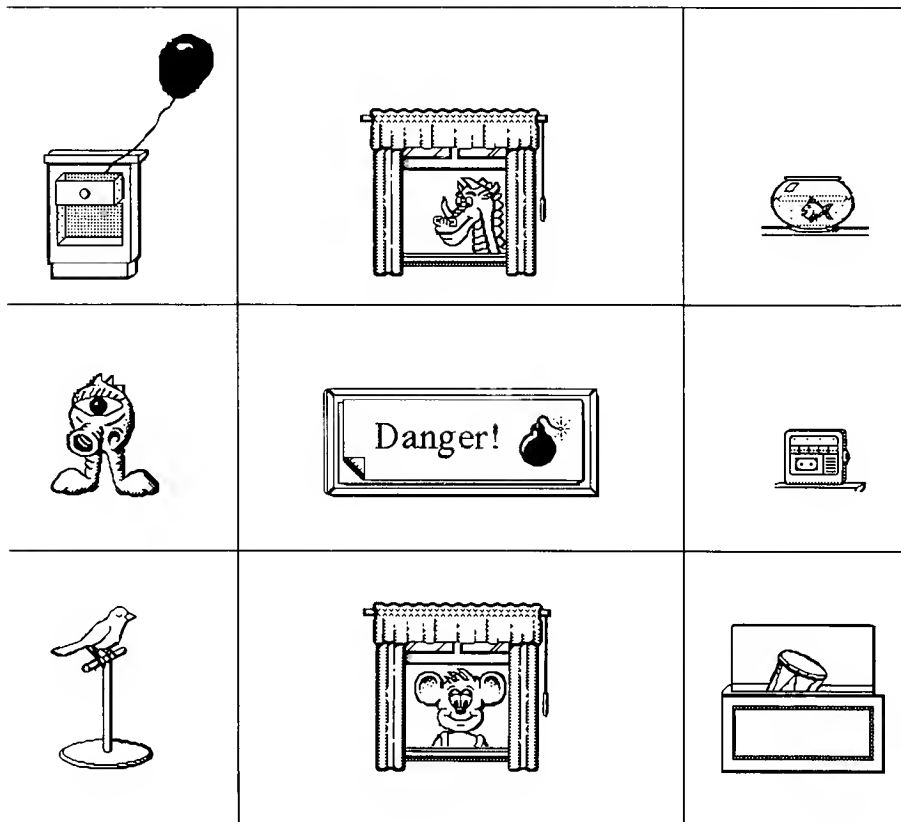
This game is a great way to practice listening skills:

Choose an object on the playroom screen that is shown on this page and “click” it to hear the sound it makes.

Using the lotto board below, ask your child to locate the picture or character that makes that sound in The Playroom.

Place a marker (a small object or piece of paper) on the picture.

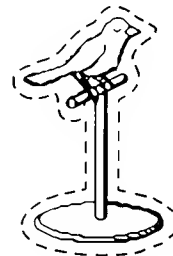
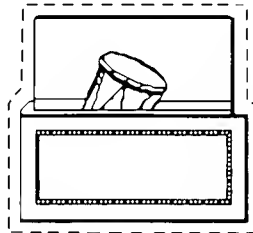
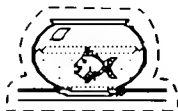
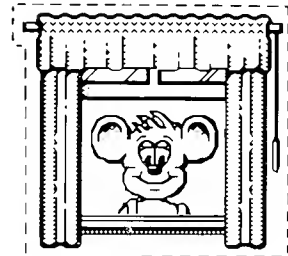
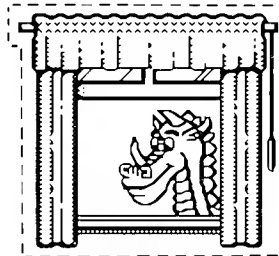
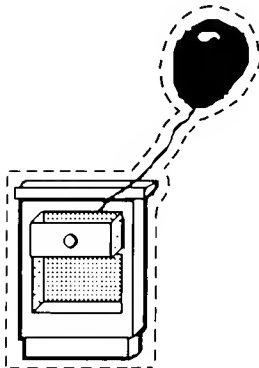
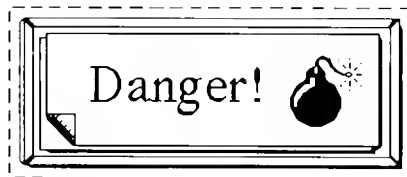
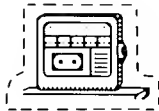
Continue until the board is filled.



Matching Game

Directions:

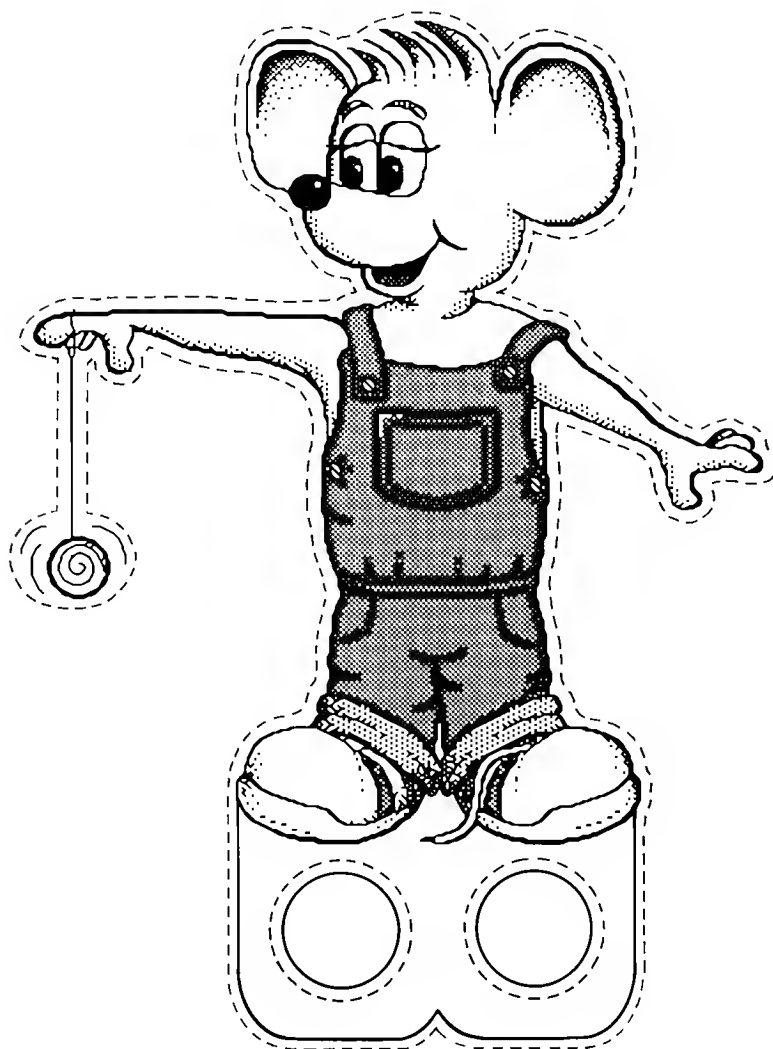
1. Cut out the game pieces.
2. Using the lotto board, have your child place each game piece on the same picture on the board.
3. Your child can also use these game pieces as prizes when playing the Counting Spinner Game.

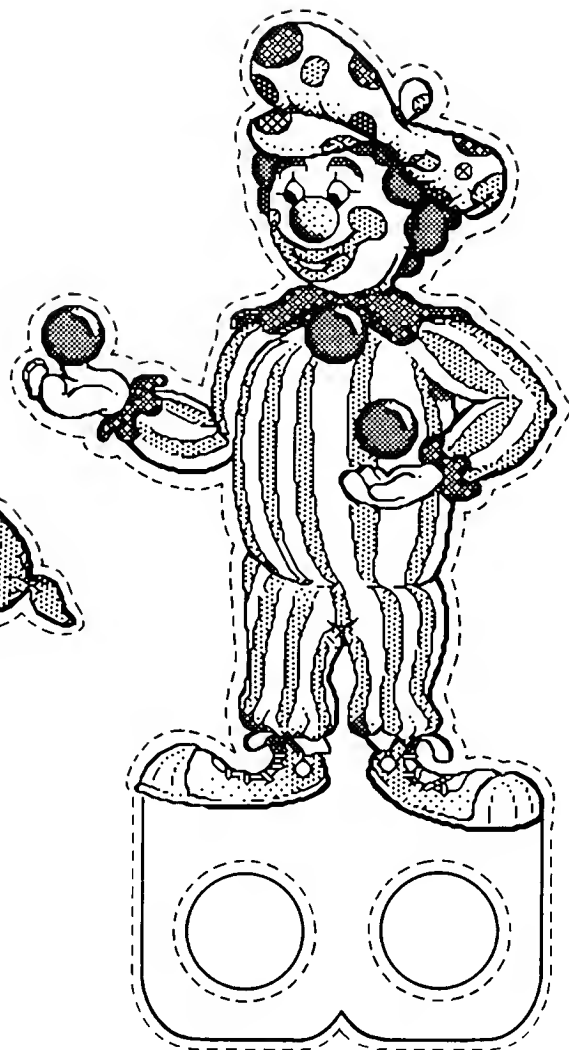


Playroom Pals

Directions:

1. Cut out the puppets on the dotted line.
2. Cut out the circles at the base of the puppet.
3. Place your finger through both holes of the puppet with the puppet facing away from you.





Counting Spinner Game

Use this spinner dial to play the Counting Spinner Game.

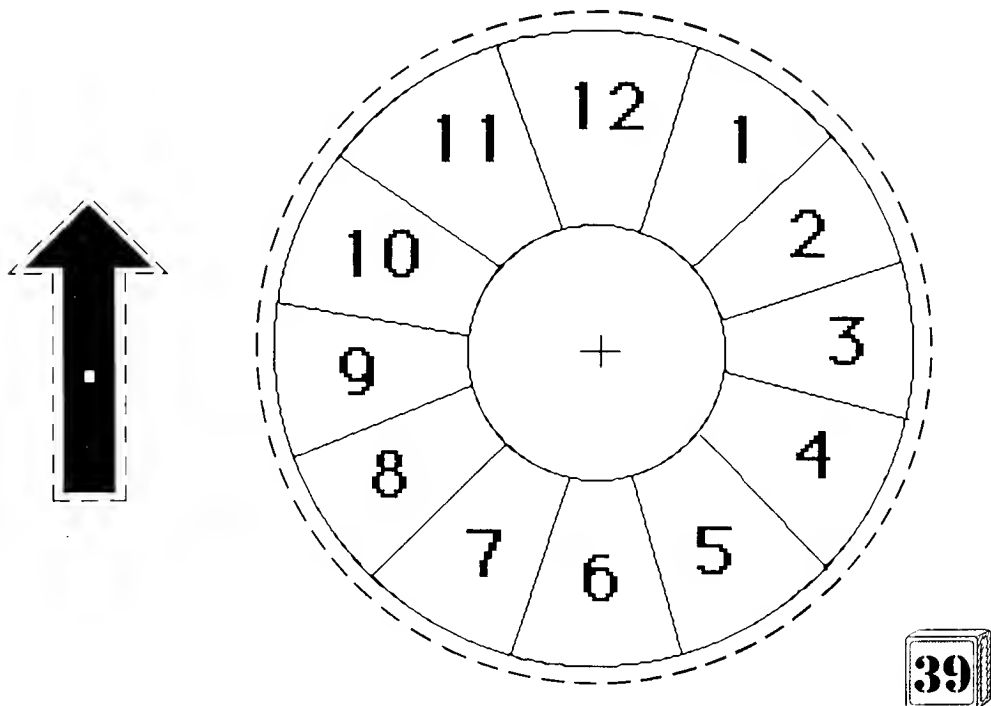
Directions:

1. Mount this page on posterboard or a paper plate.
2. Cut out spinner dial and arrow.
3. Use a brass fastener and attach the arrow to the spinner.

Ask your child to spin a number and then count out real objects to match the number shown on the spinner.

Have a supply of small blocks, game chips, or macaroni on hand – they're fun to count.

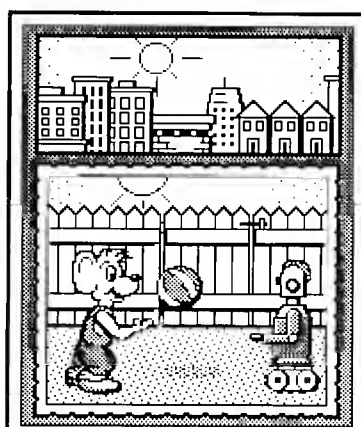
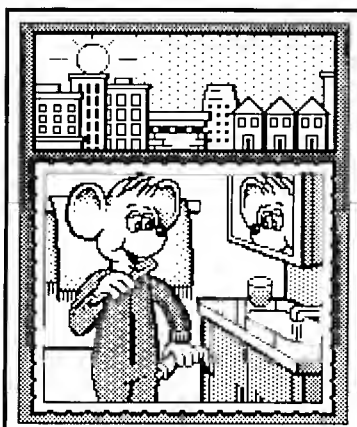
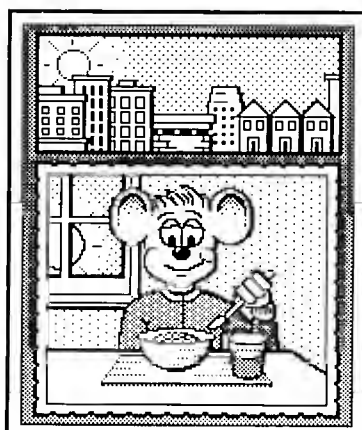
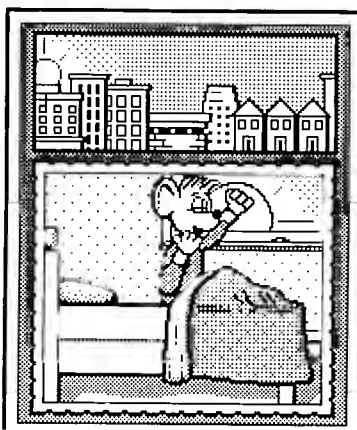
If you wish, give your child a small prize (stickers, gold stars, etc.) for correct answers.

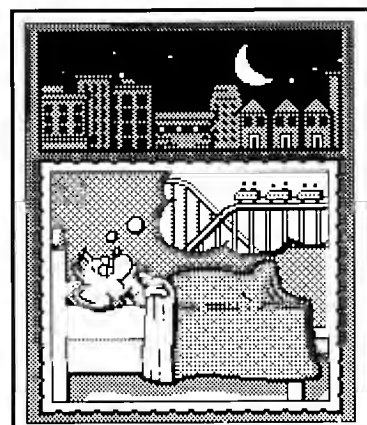
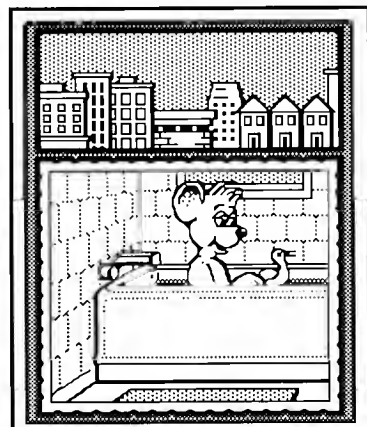
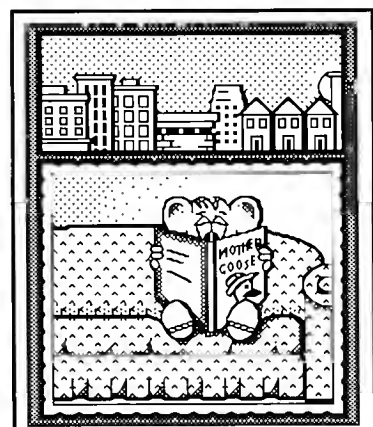
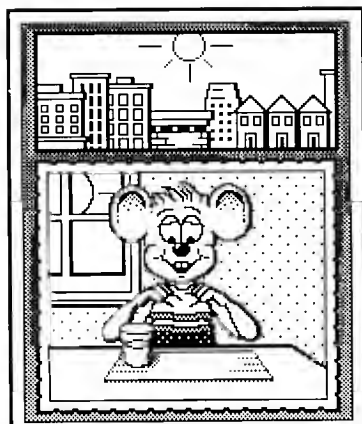
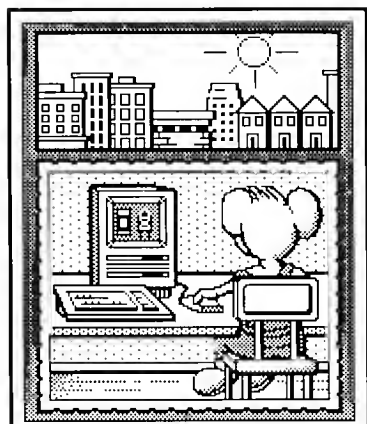


Clock Activity Sheet

Night/Day

1. Help Pepper start the day.
2. Cut out the picture cards.
3. Scramble them and then let your child put them in an order that shows the sequence in which the events occur. Have your child begin with two to three cards. Encourage your child to discuss the reasoning for his/her choice.
4. Scramble the pictures again and do the same to help organize Pepper's day.





About the Authors

LESLIE GRIMM

Leslie is a software designer and co-creator of The Playroom. She has been designing and programming educational games for young children for almost a decade. Her works include *Reader Rabbit*®, *Writer Rabbit*®, and *Think Quick!*®. Before she began creating software, she spent several years in the classroom, teaching children of many ages and abilities. Leslie has two daughters. She enjoys playing the piano, photography, swimming, and toys that do interesting things with forms and light.

DENNIS CASWELL

Dennis is a software author and co-creator of The Playroom. In addition to working on The Playroom, he has designed and programmed both educational products and games. Dennis earned an M.S. degree in Computer Science from the University of California at Los Angeles. He enjoys writing, music (he has written songs for a music box), and wind-up toys.

LYNN KIRKPATRICK

Lynn created the graphics for The Playroom. She has previously done work on *Think Quick!*®, *Children's Writing and Publishing Center*®, and *School Days Scrapbook*®. She has a degree in Art from the State University of New York at Oswego and a degree in Industrial Design from San Jose State University. Her interests are swimming, going to museums, and collecting silly gadgets.

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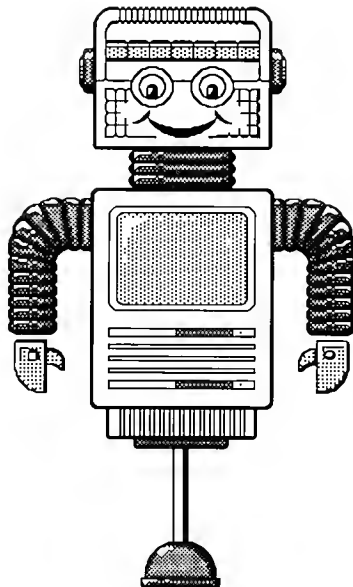
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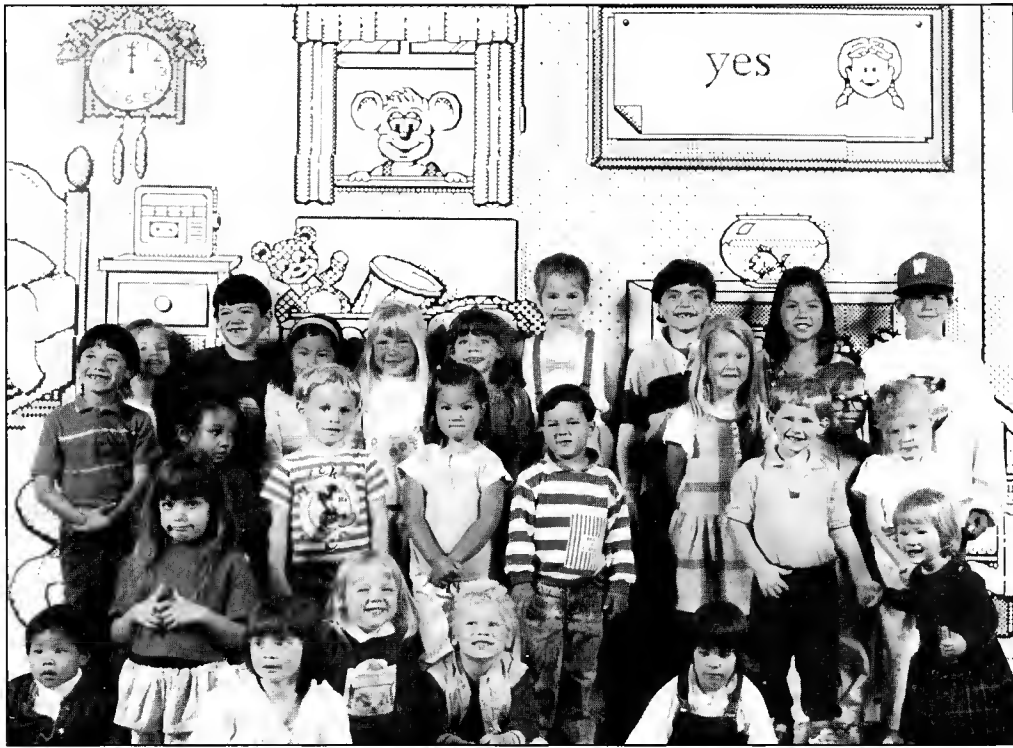


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 Danny Lam Christina Bill
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